YOU AT TMP
Loneliness in a
Broken and
healing world

THE DECK IS STACKED. YOU ARE
SWIMMING IN A LONELY POOL

IRED FOR
ONNECTION

April 2024
Carolyn Klassen
CarolynKlassen.com

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Grounding

1. Take 5 long, deep breaths through your nose, and exhale through puckered lips.
2. Place both feet flat on the floor. Wiggle your toes. Curl and uncurl your toes several times. Spend a moment noticing the sensations in your feet.
3. Stomp your feet on the ground several times. Pay attention to the sensations in your feet and legs as you make contact with the ground.
4. Clench your hands into fists, then release the tension. Repeat this 10 times.
5. Press your palms together. Press them harder and hold this pose for 15 seconds. Pay attention to the feeling of tension in your hands and arms.
6. Rub your palms together briskly. Notice the sound and the feeling of warmth.
7. Reach your hands over your head like you're trying to reach the sky. Stretch like this for 5 seconds. Bring your arms down and let them relax at your sides.
8. Take 5 more deep breaths and notice the feeling of calm in your body.

2

For slides and resources,
and to sign up for the "Wired for Connection" newsletter!
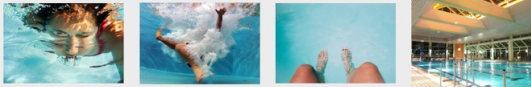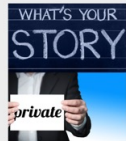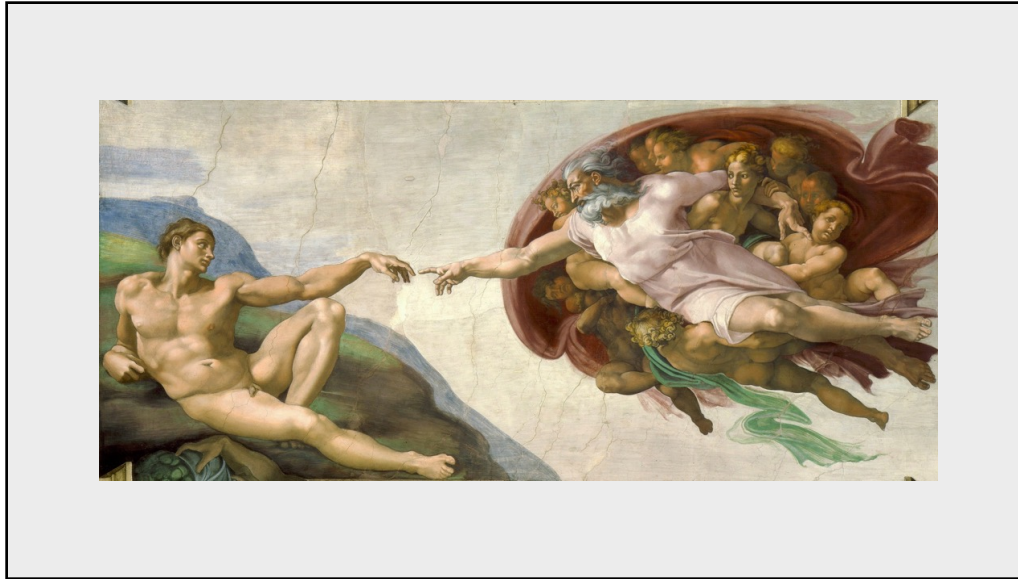
SCAN ME

3

Just a reminder

Frustration Warning
Tips and Tricks are secondary
Hold space for paying attention to the discomfort

Observe deep confidentiality
Thanx

WHAT'S YOUR STORY
private

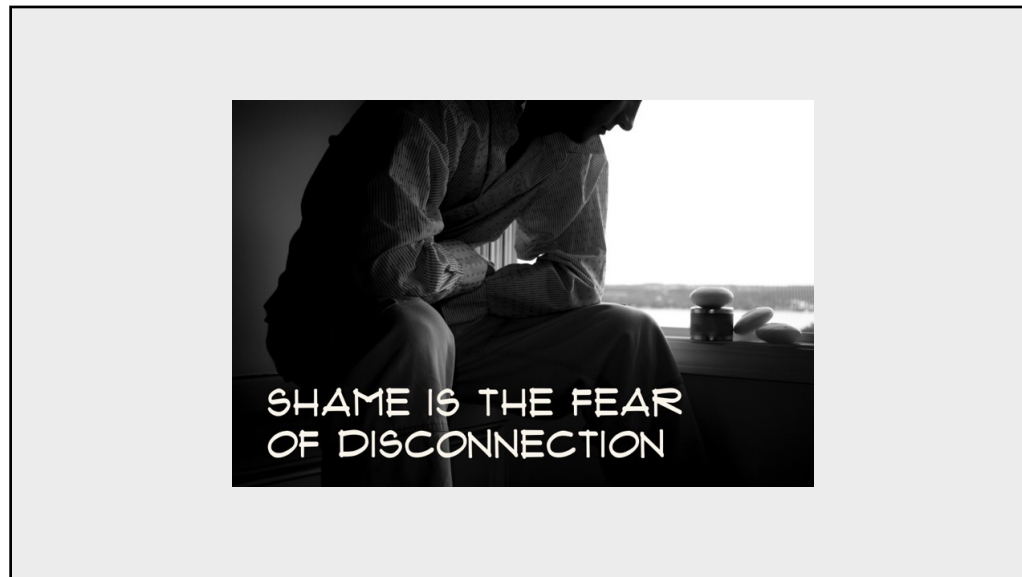Immerse at the right level for you.

4

5

6

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8

"VULNERABILITY IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF LOVE, BELONGING, JOY, COURAGE, EMPATHY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND AUTHENTICITY."

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Vulnerability practice

Risk, Uncertainty, Emotional Exposure

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Vulnerability practice

Risk, Uncertainty, Emotional Exposure

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My family
...back when

11

Barn Raising

12

Rumspringa

When sociologists were really diving into the Amish culture in the 1960s and 1970s, 75% of Amish children would decide to become Amish adults.

The most recent statistics show that 95% are now choosing to join the Amish Church.

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New Home Size

- Post World War II – 750 square feet
- 1950's -- 950 square feet
- 2000 -- 2,320 square feet

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Proportion of household types in Canada, 2016

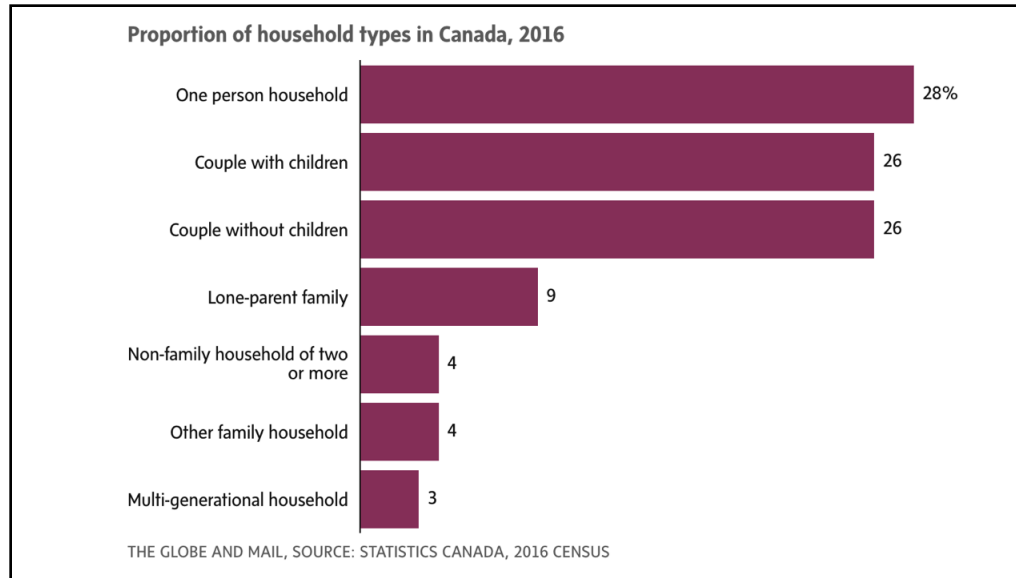| Household type	Percentage
One person household	28%
Couple with children	26
Couple without children	26
Lone-parent family	9
Non-family household of two or more	4
Other family household	4
Multi-generational household	3

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA, 2016 CENSUS

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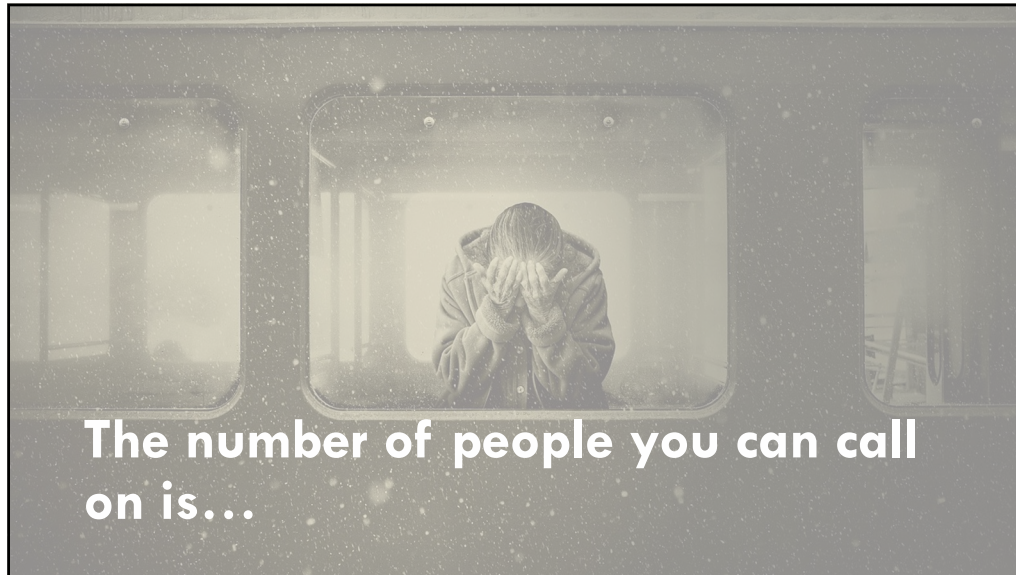In 2018, 38% of Winnipeggers were sometimes, often or very often lonely

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND

16

Between 1985-1994, active involvement in community organizations fell by 45%

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The number of people you can call on is…

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Exhaustion/Burnout vs Loneliness

- Isolation at work – distance from co-workers, lack of support and understanding for the work is hard.
- It registers as physical pain in your brain

MANAGING PEOPLE

Burnout at Work Isn't Just About Exhaustion. It's Also About Loneliness

by Emma Seppälä and Marissa King

JUNE 29, 2017

Summary Save Share Comment Text Size Print $8.95 Buy Copies

More and more people are feeling tired and lonely at work. In analyzing the General Social Survey of 2016, we found that, compared with roughly 20 years ago, people are twice as likely to report that they are always exhausted. Close to 50% of people say they are often or always exhausted due to work. This is a shockingly high statistic — and it's a 32% increase from two decades ago. What's more, there is a significant correlation between feeling lonely and work exhaustion: The more people are exhausted, the lonelier they feel.

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Loneliness starting spiking in 2012 Why?

20

2012 was the first year:
More than 50% of people had a smart phone
and
Social media platforms reached critical mass

2010 was the first year of selfie cameras on iphone

21

My keys

22

23

We pick up our phones 80 times per day

• In 2010'ish

24

I pick up my phone about 100 times per day.

Gulp!

25

We pick up our phones 150 times per day

- Overall, the average smartphone <u>owner</u> will unlock their phone at least 150 times a day.

- **The average American will check their phone once every ten to 12 minutes.**

- 66% of Americans actually check their phones 160 times every day.

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When does she blink?

- She does it automatically with subconscious discomfort

- We do the same with phone pickup

- How are we supposed to deal with the adverse feeling of loneliness when we can immediately numb it?
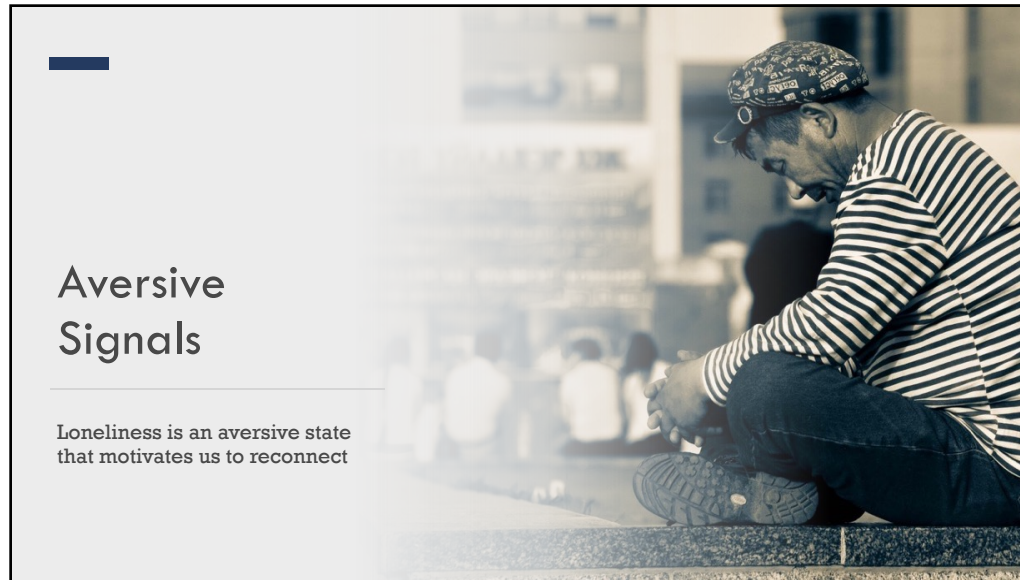
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Aversive Signals

Motivate us to act in ways that are essential to our survival
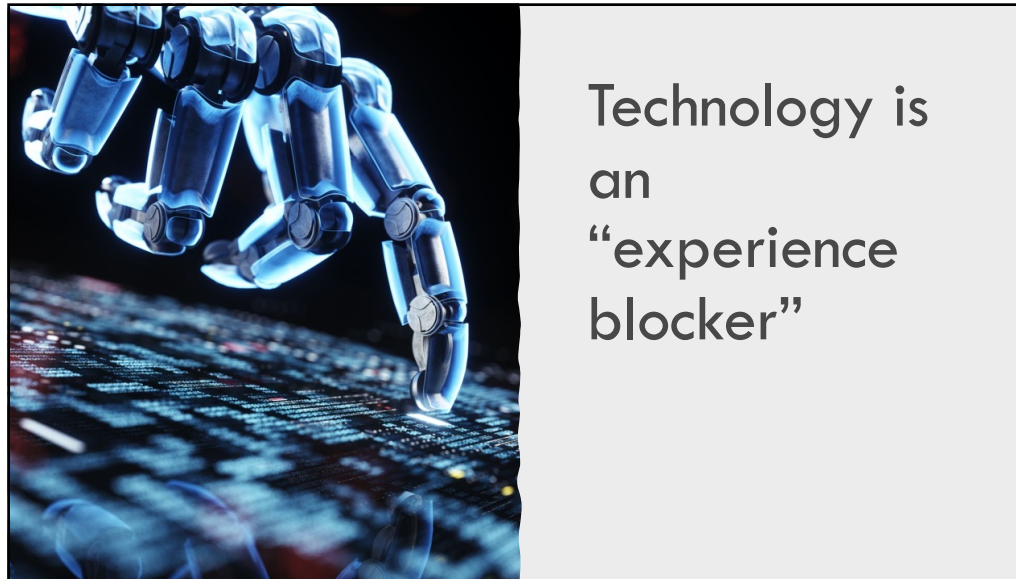
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Aversive
Signals

Loneliness is an aversive state
that motivates us to reconnect
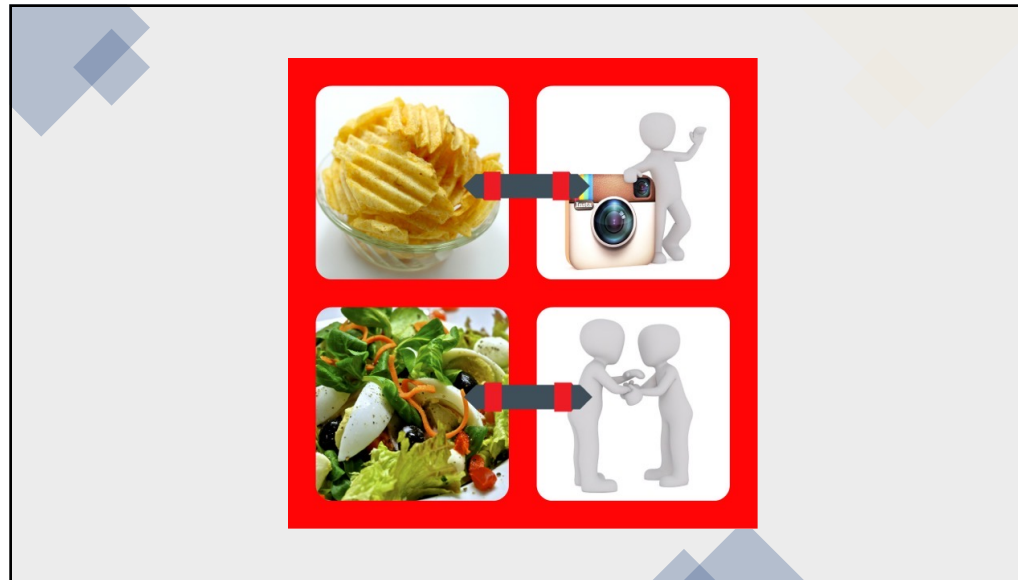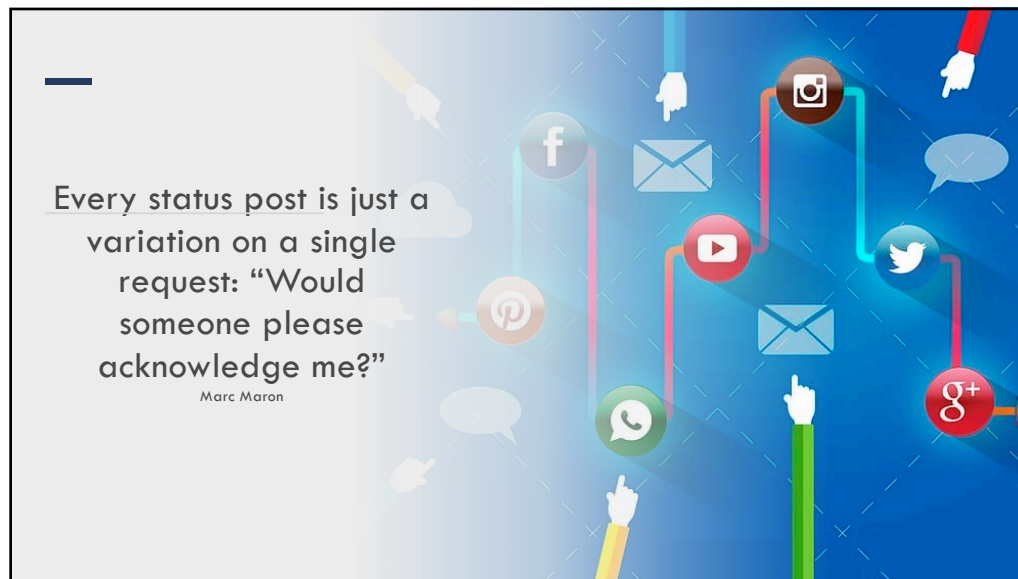
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Grocery checkout lines

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Technology is an "experience blocker"

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Every status post is just a variation on a single request: "Would someone please acknowledge me?"
Marc Maron

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Loneliness

- Is being with someone and sharing something

- Is being known, heard and understood

- Feeling lonely is very different than being alone. "There a relatively low correlation between the objective connections and perceived connections." John Caccioppo

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Fragile vs not fragile

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Fragile vs not fragile vs anti-fragile

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Biosphere

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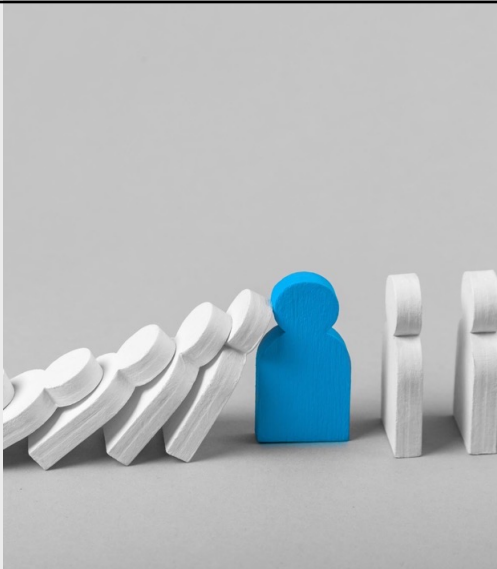
Our psychological immune system

- It isn't fragile, or not fragile
- We are "anti-fragile" creatures

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Our psychological immune system

- We need interpersonal stressors to handle and process and get past frustrations, minor accidents, teasing, exclusion, perceived injustices, and normal conflicts without falling prey to intense inner turmoil.

- In other words—it's a part of healthy living to experience interpersonal distress.

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Staying away to protect ourselves creates mental health problems
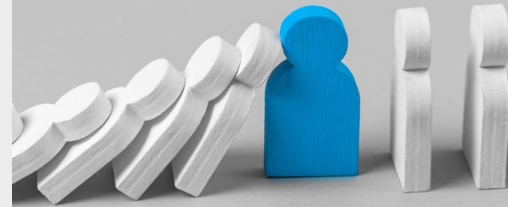
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Safety in relationships isn't "no danger"

It's disagreeing and criticizing ideas respectfully

Engaging debate

Encountering ideas that are uncomfortable and exploring them together

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SAFETY ISN'T THE ABSENCE OF THREAT;
IT IS THE PRESENCE OF CONNECTION

DR. GABOR MATÉ

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People must belong to a tribe

We are the first humans in history to ever dismantle our tribes.

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Social prescribing

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The **cow:** an antidepressant

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The **community** provides treatment

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We belong to each other
Mother Teresa
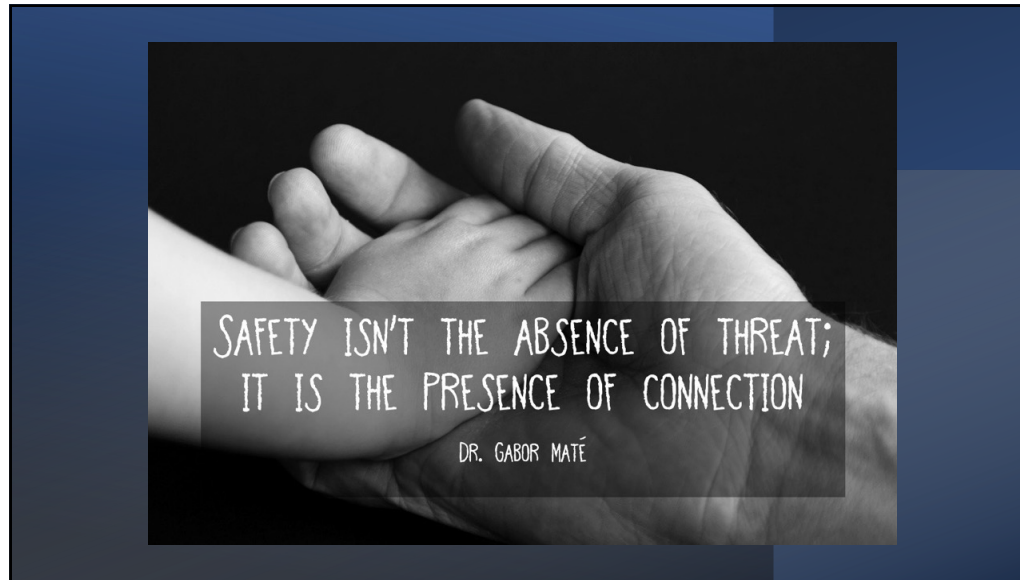
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4 features of relationships typical for all of history:

1. EMBODIED: use our bodies to communicate and respond to others.
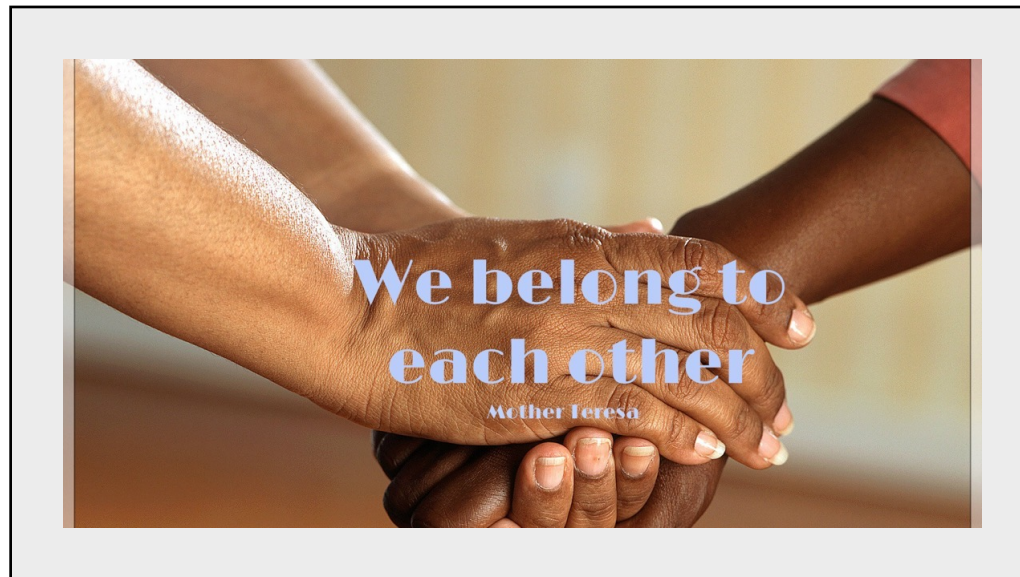2. SYNCHRONOUS: happening at the same time, reading cues about timing and turn taking
3. 1:1 or 1:several communication
4. High bar for entry and exit within community. People are strongly motivated.

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IRL

1. EMBODIED: use our bodies to communicate and respond to others.
2. SYNCHRONOUS: happening at the same time, reading cues about timing and turn taking
3. 1:1 or 1:several communication
4. High bar for entry and exit within community. People are strongly motivated.

Virtual relationships

1. Disembodied: no bodies required, only language
2. Largely Asynchronous
3. 1: many communication, often multiple conversations at once
4. Low bar for entry and exit: blocking, quitting, short lived communities, disposable relationships

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What next?

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1. BYOB

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BYOB
Be your own bestie

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2. Treat like with like:
- Hunger with food
- Thirst with hydration
- Shortness of breath with oxygen
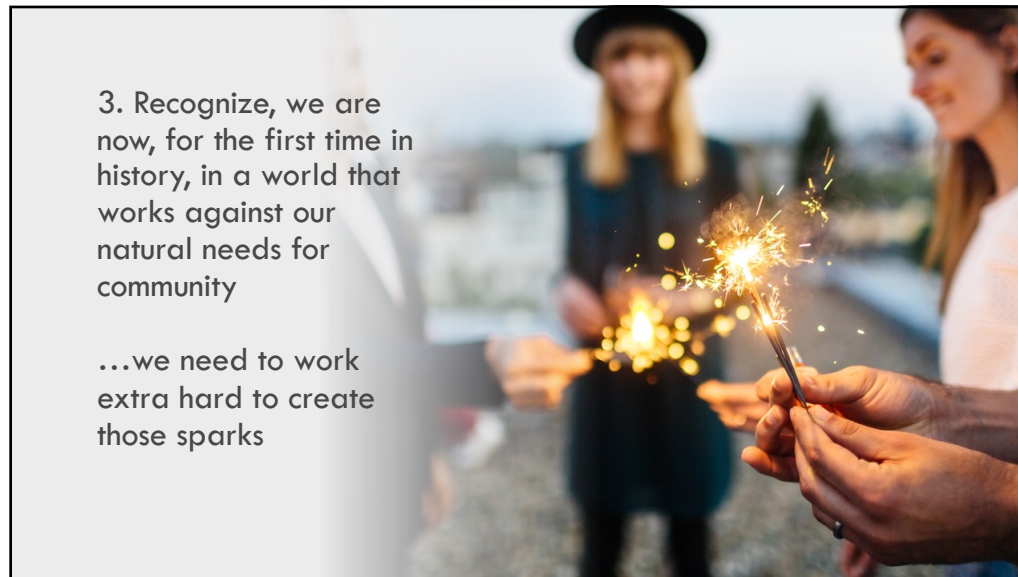
and
- Loneliness with connection

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3. Recognize, we are now, for the first time in history, in a world that works against our natural needs for community
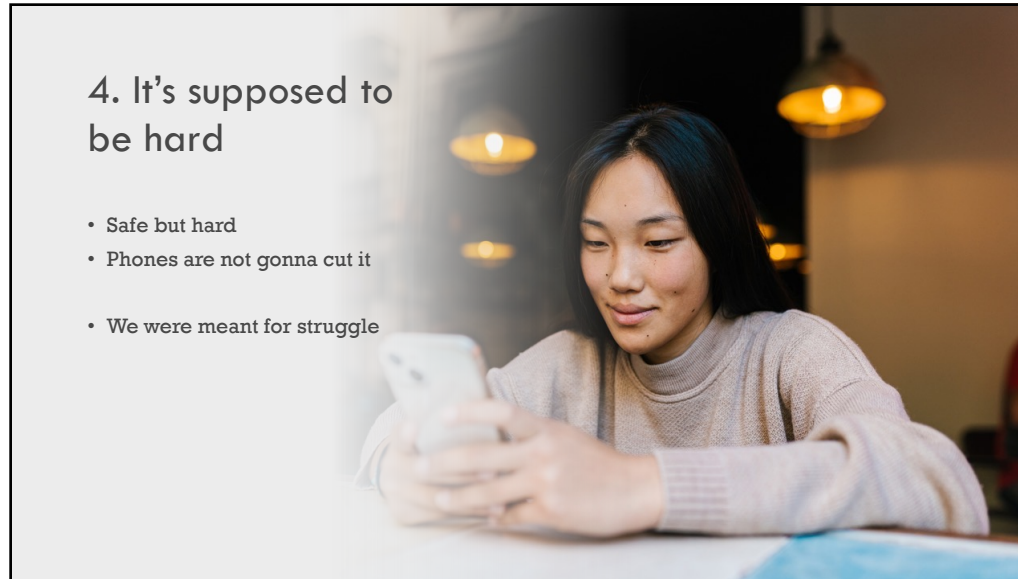
55

3. Recognize, we are now, for the first time in history, in a world that works against our natural needs for community

...we need to work extra hard to create those sparks
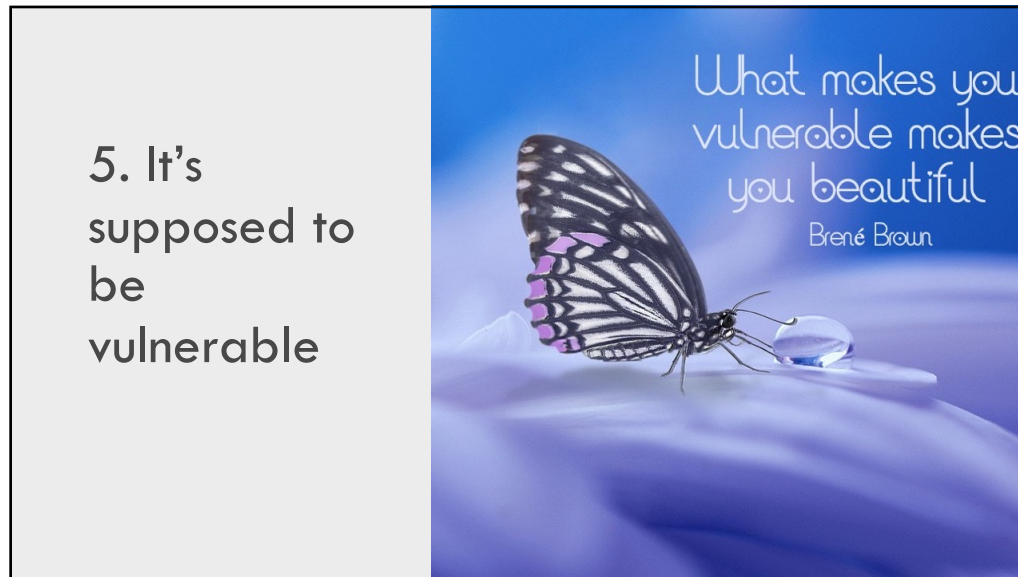
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4. It's supposed to be hard

- Safe but hard
- Phones are not gonna cut it

- We were meant for struggle

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5. It's supposed to be vulnerable

What makes you
vulnerable makes
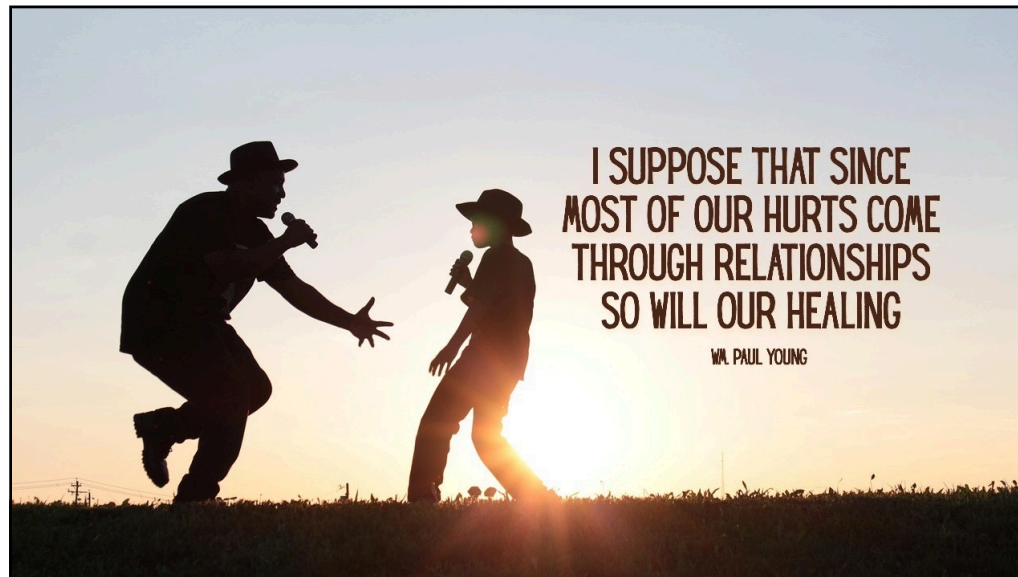you beautiful
Brené Brown

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To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness.

CS Lewis

But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable.
To love is to be vulnerable.

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I SUPPOSE THAT SINCE MOST OF OUR HURTS COME THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS SO WILL OUR HEALING

WM. PAUL YOUNG

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6. We can do hard things

- The work day here on Saturday
- Volunteering
- Parallel action/work
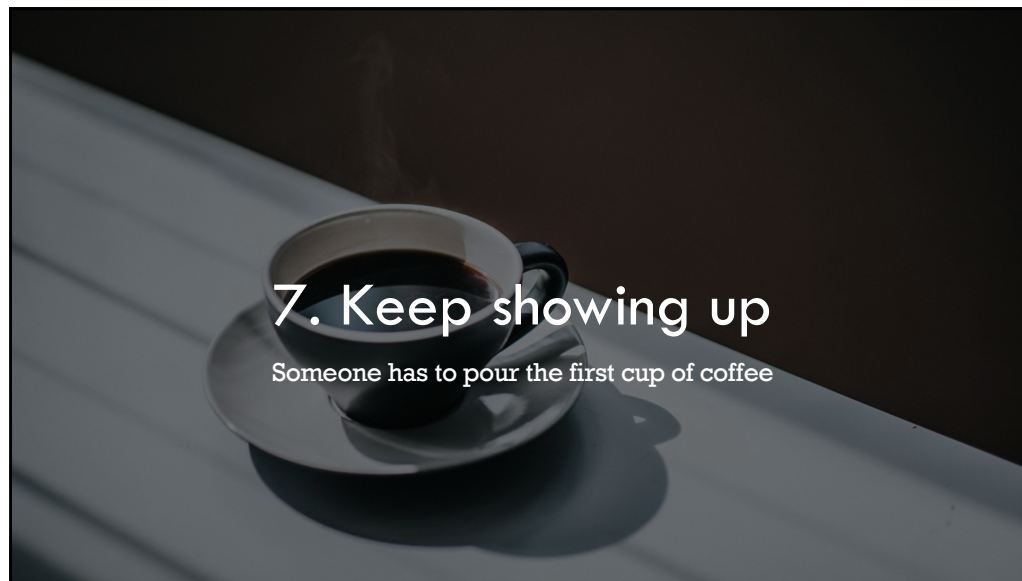- Home churches

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Caveats

Getting "unlonely" involves risks which, by definition, won't always work out well. It will go poorly sometimes. That's being alive.

Let yourself *be known*.
Simply being with people isn't enough

62

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7. Keep showing up

Someone has to pour the first cup of coffee

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Get on the boat.
Climb on the helicopter.
The rescue from loneliness to
connection may look different
than what you think.

68

Integrity is choosing courage over comfort; choosing what is right over what is fun, fast, or easy; and choosing to practice our values rather than simply professing them.

Brene Brown
#RisingStrong

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8. The reality…

- If more than one in three is lonely, do the math.

Consider *being* the solution:

Start a house church

Create a book club--for 4 weeks

Make up a soup group

Invite the grumpy neighbour over

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The reality…

- If more than one in three is lonely, do the math.

- And the math **does not** mean counting $$ –It does not have to cost a lot to connect

- Having people over to your home may feel weird for you both, but actually works

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Only the soul that ventilates the world with tenderness has any chance of changing the world.
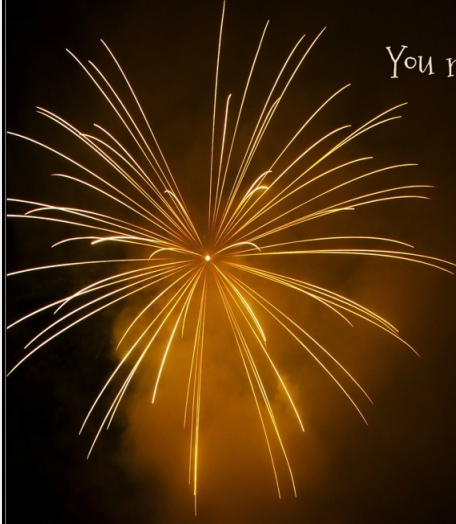
Gregory Boyle

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resources,
and to sign up for the
"Wired for
Connection" newsletter!

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Here is your life.
You might never have been,
but you are because
the party wouldn't
have been complete
without you.
Here is the world.
Beautiful and terrible
things will happen.
Don't be afraid.
F. Buechner

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